In this issue:

Jamie Agena
James Becker
Neal Bonenfant
Valerie Brancher
Eric Brandt
Tonya Cox
Ginny David
Zabia Dolle
Joy Hewett
Kim Katsarsky
Eileen Kunimura
Franklin Kwan
Tommy Leong
Trisha Loo
Rae Marlow
R. E. McFeeters
Mike Molloy
Kimi Morton
Kimberley Nail
Pat Sakal
Susan Sanger
Bryan A. Sekiguchi
Christina Siu
Phyllis M. Stine
Wing Lung Tsang
Mark Vega
Cassandra Walton
Rina Yadao
Yukiko Yoshino
Raymond Yuen

Ka Nani
Kapi‘olani Community College
4303 Diamond Head Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

Ka Nani ’94
Ka Nani will publish its next issue during the summer of 1995. Deadline for submissions will be during spring semester, 1995. Watch for notices in Kapi‘o and on bulletin boards around campus. Anyone interested in working on the staff may contact the Ka Nani Adviser through the Language Arts Department in Kalia 101. Ka Nani invites submissions of imaginative literature — chiefly poetry, fiction, and short plays — and original artwork and photographs. Questions regarding submissions of writings or artwork may also be addressed to the Ka Nani Adviser.

Ka Nani is produced and published by students of Kapi‘olani Community College, with funding provided by the Board of Student Publications of Kapi‘olani Community College. Submissions and correspondence should be addressed to Ka Nani Adviser, Language Arts Department, Kapi‘olani Community College, 4303 Diamond Head Road, Honolulu, Hawaii 96816.

© 1994 Board of Student Publications, Kapi‘olani Community College. All rights reserved by the authors. The views herein are those of the authors, not the editors or sponsors.

Contents

Poetry

Aoi mizu o miru by Kim Katsarsky ........................................... 5
Canis Latrans by R. E. McFeeters ........................................... 9
Tying the Knot by Jamie Agena ............................................. 11
Flower Artist’s Friendship by Joy Hewett ................................. 15
T.V. Blues by Cassandra Walton ........................................... 16
From Ashes to Ashes by Christina Siu .................................... 18
The Things You Do by Rina Yadao ........................................ 21
Wind by Zabia Dole ............................................................. 25
A Brother’s Death by Michael Molloy ................................. 27
Chartreuse to Blue by Rae Marlow ................................. 33
If Only You Knew by Cassandra Walton ................................ 34
Ikue by Yukiko Yoshino ...................................................... 35
Runner by Eileen Kunimura ............................................... 36
The Shaman by Neal Bonenfant ......................................... 39
Ferrari by Franklin Kwan ................................................... 40
Braving the Storm by Rae Marlow ......................................... 49
Francesca and the Frozen Plain by James Becker .............. 50
Francesca Amid the Ancient Warriors by James Becker .... 52
The Queen’s Defense by James Becker ................................ 54
Shattered Windows by Kimberley Nail .............................. 61
The Beach by Tonya Cox ....................................................... 70
Coloured by Cassandra Walton ........................................... 72
Dad by Susan Sanger ......................................................... 73
Gateway by Eric Brandt ...................................................... 74
In a Room Down the Hall by Pat Sakal ................................. 77
Prose

You Could've Had It Delivered by Tommy Leong .................................................. 6
Stomach the Edge by Eric Brandt ................................................................. 22
Power by Ginny David .......................................................... 28
Caravans by Mark Vega ................................................................. 42
Little Red Riding Hood Redux by Eric Brandt .................................................. 56
Sorrow for Yesterdays by Kimberley Nail .................................................. 64

Art

Water Lily, photograph, by Phyllis M. Stine ......................................... cover
Line, Form & Texture, photograph, by Phyllis M. Stine .......................... 8
Still Life, Conte Crayon, by Wing Lung Tsang ........................................ 10
Be Kind to Your Pumpkin, photograph, by Raymond Yuen .................. 20
Liliaceae, photograph, by Bryan A. Sekiguchi ..................................... 26
Untitled, computer art, by Kimi Morton ............................................. 32
Rosie, watercolor, by Valerie Brancher ............................................. 38
Kewalo Basin, photograph, by Bryan A. Sekiguchi ................................ 48
Yesterday, photograph, by Trisha Loo ............................................... 63
5:45 p.m., photograph, by Bryan A. Sekiguchi .................................... 69
Asplenium Nidus, photograph, by Bryan A. Sekiguchi .......................... 76
Island Woman, computer art .......................................................... 79

Aoi mizu o miru

Aoi mizu o miru
ippai sakana ga iru
isogashii sekai no yoni
ippai hito ga iru

sakana wa shinsettsu desu
hitotachi wa taihen desu
chigai wa me ni mieru

sakana no seikatsu wa tanoshii desu
ningen no seikatsu wa muzukashii desu

sakana wa mahataki shinai

See the blue water
fall of fish
like the busy world
full of people

Fish are easy-going
people are cumbersome
The difference is visible

A fish's life is enjoyable
A human's life is hard

Fish don't wink

Kim Katsarsky

See the blue water
full of fish
like the busy world
full of people

Fish are easy-going
people are cumbersome
The difference is visible

A fish's life is enjoyable
A human's life is hard

Fish don't wink
Scott clutched the steering wheel with both hands like a drowning man with a life preserver. The streets he was so familiar with looked completely different. The small Pizza Hut box sat patiently on the passenger seat filling the car with the scent of its warm contents.

Scott sat at the intersection looking straight ahead, overly aware of the red traffic lights beaming at him in his peripheral vision.

He thought of what the pizza might say: "You could’ve had me delivered!"

No. He wanted to drive there. He wanted to taunt fate. He wanted to see if he could drive there without a licensed driver with him for a change. Besides he was alone at home and hungry.

The red disappeared and a polite bluish-green invited him through the intersection. Scott slowly eased his foot onto the gas pedal so as not to send this two-thousand pounds of glass and steel flying through the intersection uncontrollably, slamming into innumerable parked cars and slaughtering innocent bystanders. His stomach was turning. He wasn’t sure if it was the hunger or stress.

The Pizza Hut at the mall wasn’t that far away, but it felt like this trip was lasting several weeks. Scott snapped his eyes to the odometer to make sure he wasn’t speeding. He was going about five miles over the speed limit. But it didn’t matter much because he knew as a passenger that going twenty-five was too slow.

Scott’s senses were in overdrive and his mind was racing. He felt as alert and conscious of his surroundings as he ever was or ever would be. Looking in his rear view mirror changed his mind. The silhouette of the car behind its headlights revealed what appeared to be a fixture on the top of its roof.

"It’s a police car!" screamed Scott. "Oh shoots!"

Scott could see it in his mind. "Driver," a nasally, megaphoned voice would boom, "Step out of the car with your hands above your head."

By evening’s end after the body cavity search, he would have been fingerprinted, photographed and booked for driving without a license. His parents would come down to the police station to bail him out and he’d have to explain that he had just wanted pizza for dinner.

"You could’ve had it delivered!" they’d scream.

"Relax, he doesn’t have his lights on. Scott fixed his eyes on the road ahead of him. Scott remembered he was hauling ass at thirty miles an hour. He’d considered hitting the brakes, but that would arouse too much suspicion. Nobody gets pulled over for going thirty miles an hour, he reassured himself.

Scott kept a close eye on his rear view mirror. The police car was keeping its distance moving at the same speed. His neighborhood was going by him slowly as he approached his street.

"Don’t mess up. You’re less than a block from your house," he thought.

Unclenching his hand from the steering wheel, Scott moved to signal his intentions. The blinker clicked rhythmically like a time bomb. He placed his foot delicately on the brake and slowed the car down summoning up all of his brain power to execute his turn. One hand followed the other around the steering wheel as he carefully navigated the car around into his street.

The car suddenly jerked as he drove one wheel too close to the curb. Scott gritted his teeth and swallowed hard. He felt as though he would have pulled the steering wheel off. Finishing his turn, Scott brought his car up to speed. His eyes slowly brought the mirror into focus with a perfect view of an empty street behind him. Scott’s heart started to beat again.

Scott’s hands ached and his head was buzzing. His heart was beating as if it were trying to break out. He landed on the sofa and settled his nerves in the silence of the empty house.

A couple of minutes later he realized that he had left the pizza in the car.
Canis Latrans

I am gray
Live in the desert
Howl at the moon at night
Eat lizards
And am full of cement.

Some Indians say I am good luck.
Others consider me bad —
I might lead you to water
More often astray.

I am a distant lupine cousin.
My likeness is etched in stone.
I have been here for millennia
But you rarely see me.

I may be only eyes in the night
Or a sudden whispered rush.
You may look for me
But I won’t be there.

P. S.,
I just put the cement in
To make it hard.
Tying the Knot

Should I get married?
Do I really want to commit myself to just one man?
Me get married!
Shock all my friends with my
Wedding dress and a garter on my thigh.
Don’t treat him good unless I want something
Then maybe pack him a cookie in his lunch and join him on the grass
Right next to the hot dog stand where he works,
Waiting for him to lean over and give me a kiss
And pull out the jewelry box containing the four-carat tennis
Bracelet I’ve always dreamed of!
Instead, I settle for a hug and a mere,
“Thanks, babe, for joining me for lunch and the cookie.”
Then I get up to leave, all disappointed.
I feel myself turning around and yelling,
“Love you!”

Next, his parents!
My hair washed and nicely combed, my prettiest dress on,
Standing as straight as I possibly can — Do they like me,
Why are they staring at me like I’m not good
Enough for their son?
Is my dress slutty looking? Why aren’t they talking?
How did I get myself into this situation?
I’m just an average girl, who used to run around
In Wonder Woman’s Underoos.
Do I really have to go through with this?
His parents are probably saying,
“They’re too young to get married! She’s the wrong one for him!”
They actually have voices! They ask me, “How old are you?”
Should I tell them my real age,
Or do they want me to say a certain number?
Would they approve if I’m two years younger than their son?
Then they ask happily, “When is the wedding date?”
And now should I ask for a glass of water?

Oh, Good Gravy, Marie, the wedding!
All his friends and family and my family
And friends that don’t get along.
My divorced parents trying to keep smiling,
But they’re just waiting to kill each other.
And the priest,
Checking me out like he’s seen me down on Hotel Street.
Do you promise to love him, honor him in sickness
And in health ’til death do you part?
I don’t remember what I’m supposed to say,
So I say okay and
Kiss the man I have just committed my life to.
All his friends coming up to him and saying,
“So, what you guys going do tonight?”
On the other hand, my friends crying tears of happiness,
“We’re so happy you’re married! Boo hoo-hoo!”
But in their eyes I can see they are happy they aren’t married,
Because they can still go out dancing and have fun!
Then it is time to leave . . .
Rice being thrown,
As the limo pulls around, all I see is condoms all over the car
And those awful soda cans,
How embarrassing.

Next, the honeymoon — everyone with their wandering minds.
His mother still looking at me with question marks.
My friends asking how many kids I want . . .

His friends saying, “Go for the Gold!”
No. No. What am I thinking? I ought to get married.
I don’t want to become a nun.
And what fun it would be to come home,
go to bed and wake up in his arms the next morning.
And he loves me so much that he has my name tattooed on his arm
And him coming home and saying,
“I brought dinner,” it’s hot dogs from his hot-dog stand
And me just running to him saying,
“Thanks! I love you! Oh, my Love!”

Gosh, I’d love married life!
I have to get my wedding dress made,
Long, white, and so pretty that he’ll faint when he sees me in it.
Go and get his wedding band, a strong band,
So if he sees a girl as pretty as Cindy Crawford he can’t take it off.

He’s mine forever.
Then I finally go and get him and say,
“Look up in the sky, it’s a falling star, make a wish!”
After the star is finally out of sight, I turn to him and ask,
“What did you wish? Wait, I don’t want to know. Yes, I do — NO!”

But if I actually go through with this
And we get married in front of a judge
And it’s hot and informal,
Like giving birth to a baby in a barn,
With no doctors around, it’s all right.
I can handle it.
Then me nervously awaiting his decision on
What name he picked out for our baby boy!
Then finally the moment arrives. He looks at me and says,
“Our son’s name will be Pee-Wee.”
I won’t argue one bit because I have other things to worry about —
Like being a good mother,
Making sure the neighbors don't think I'm abusing my kid.
No! No! I shouldn't get married; there's too much involved!

But what if I got married to a tall handsome man,
Very intellectual looking,
Wearing a suit to work with a briefcase in his hand
And we live in a big house near the beach
Where there is a view of the sunrise
And sunset?

No, that's not right — I don't want fantasy,
I'm happy with the man I have!
I love this man so much!
I have to get married. It's a once-in-a-lifetime thing!
I don't want to look back one day —
When I'm 90 years old, my hair all white, my skin wrinkled,
And no man looking at me —
I don't want to regret not getting married
And experiencing life to the fullest.
So I should get married! I should tie the knot.

---

**Flower Artist's Friendship**

Joy Hewett

Warm breath on a stem
Bends it to the curve of grace.
Share the bloom's laughter.
Cassandra Walton

T.V. Blues

Every morning except weekends, he shaves his stubble. She stands looking in the mirror, fumbling with her watch. The kids wake up and want to watch television. Cereal's on the table, everyone digs in, while outside the early morning black turns blue. No one talks, just the T.V., in the background.

For the job, they’d asked for his background. He feels his face for stubble. The sensation of the day oozes blue. Driving to his next interview, he glances at his watch. Through his mind he digs; Why can’t life be more like television?

It’s lunchtime, the kids walk in and flip on the television. They sit at the table; MTV plays in the background. One of the kids draws a heart around the name of a boy she digs. She crosses her legs and gets pricked by stubble, then turns toward the T.V., to watch. The room glows and dances blue.

Since he’d lost his job, their world had been blue coated, far from the restoration of normalcy at the end of the half hour on television. Sometimes she’d force herself to sit and watch, hearing the T.V. shows in the background. She stares off, moving her hand over the velvet stubble of her chair, wishing there was something she could dig.

Another day is done. The kids play music they dig. Outside the day blue turns to night blue. He looks in the sink; from the morning, littering the porcelain, lies his stubble. In the mirror he examines his face with telescopic vision. He can hear her and the kids talking in the background. He can’t talk, he can’t watch.

She comes into the bedroom, changes and takes off her watch. It’s time to climb into bed and dig for comfort. His heavy breath echoes in the background of her waking sleep. The room is cold and blue. Their life will never be like television. She reaches over, touches his face and feels the stubble.

Tomorrow they’ll watch again, letting in the blue. As they dig themselves deeper into the television, sounds from the background will rub them like stubble.

16
17
From Ashes to Ashes

The sun beats down upon the surf
as the waves roll in with crests of white.
The scene itself is out of prehistoric time
with wind rushing across water
to catch, before it disappears, a view
of fine, black and dense volcanic ash.

Into the sky spews the devil's cauldron of ash,
tumbling dangerously below to pounding surf.
Ocean meets land as the seagulls cry at the view.
Volcanic particles darken clouds of white
and the green-blue sea is now a pool of brownish water
in an eruption that has seemed to stop time.

Later this will mark an important part in time.
Soon formed by the hot, stinging ash
a lush and beautiful island will form in the water.
Upon its sandy shore will rush frothy surf
to bring back treasures and shells of pearly white.
Oh! The angels and Gods will love the view.

Above the clouds and land, out of our view,
lies the home of the unworldly and father time.
It is they who create beaches sandy white,
they who began the transformation of the ash
into an island surrounded by raging surf,
they who created mankind out of water.

All life is sustained by bountiful water,
it can also take it away in another's view.
For when the skies make war with peaceful surf
nature is shortening all living things' time
on this land, and we will return to the earth as ash,
when the sun no longer shines bright and white.

But until the sea opens wide and we see the angel white,
we must laugh, dance and live well off the water.
Forget for a while the ominous hanging over of ash
and pray that we will one day have a future to view.
Leave for ourselves a place in history and time
never to be washed away with the surf.

Remember white beaches, that created a great view
and waves of water flowing over centuries of time
for soon it will carry our ashes away into the choppy surf.
I know I hide your truck keys
and eat the last of the ice cream.
But to me
you deserve it.
You forget to pay the electric bill,
and you didn’t feed the fish.
So can you blame me,
for giving you a funny haircut?
You aren’t where you’re supposed to be
when you ask me to pick you up.
So don’t get upset,
if the towels are too soft
because I put Downy in them.
So just remember,
the things you do
to piss me off
will definitely come
right back at you!
Maybe it’s blood,” Ralph said to his brother Jeff as they walked along the drain ditch. The ditch ran along the edge of one side of the wooden corral. The boys were walking out to one of the ranch’s horse pastures, to dig thistles before they went to seed and sprouted more of the obnoxious weeds.

There was a thin, reddish-brown crust that floated on the surface and clung to the edge of the ditch water. The crust was visible along the shallow edges of the ditch for the entire length of the corral. Ralph and Jeff stopped to look closer at the crust. They poked at it with their shovels. They looked at each other squeamishly, remembering the grotesque scene they had witnessed the week before. They both felt a wave of nausea as the images came back to their minds. Jeff said solemnly, “Yeah, maybe it’s blood.”

They walked on through the corral in silence and on out to the pasture, each of them trying to digest the incident.

Every summer it was Ralph’s, Jeff’s and their four sisters’ job to saddle break and train the horses on the family ranch. Their mother loved to raise horses and she taught the children how to work well with them. The family raised, trained and sold Pony of America horses, which are miniature Appaloosas. These horses are a unique and beautiful breed with their spotted coloring. Their size is perfect for children or adults to ride.

It was a beautiful morning in June on the southern Idaho horse and cattle ranch. The mares were feeling high-spirited and rambunctious. They were galloping through the corral, kicking up their heels, farting loudly and playing follow the leader. The boys had herded the mares in from the pasture and were going to herd them into another smaller corral. There the horses could be coaxed into ropes, reins and saddles for training.

On the opposite side of the ditch was a narrow embankment. It sloped upward gradually from the ditch for about ten feet to a wire fence. The slope was level enough for the horses to run along from one end of the corral to the opposite side.

The lead mare jumped the four-foot-wide, foot-deep ditch and tore off down the embankment. The other mares followed closely. When they reached the far end of the corral, one hundred feet away, they whirled and shot off back to the other side, doing this over and over.

Ralph’s mother, brother and sisters all stood watching the mares for several moments, planning how to corner the mares and bring their play to a halt so the training could begin. They were hesitant to stop the horseplay because the horses were having so much fun. They were beautiful to watch, especially when they were feeling frisky and spunky. Usually they’d get excited like this only in the cool of the mornings or evenings. Their play expressed the sheer joy of being alive and healthy on a summer morning.

After making several passes up and down the fence line and ditch, the horses came to the edge of the corral closest to where the family was standing. The mare in the lead turned quickly again and took off, while the other mares jostled for room to make the turn. One pretty chestnut mare started to wheel and was halfway around when she lost footing on the soft dirt. Her momentum flung her over onto her side. Everyone watched in horror as she came down on top of a small log that had a limb jutting up from it. The mare landed on the sharp, one-foot-long limb. They heard the sound of the limb puncturing her side and breaking several ribs. Their voices echoed the groan the mare made as the air was knocked out of her when she came to rest on top of the log. There was a moment of stunned silence. Then she started kicking and struggling to get off the log. The other mares stopped running and stood watching nervously. In one quick moment the spirit of the day had changed from joy to the dread of death.

Ralph’s mother snapped out of her paralyzed state and told Ralph to come with her to get the mare off the limb. They jumped the ditch to where the mare lay groaning painfully. Ralph could see blood starting to trickle out of the mare’s mouth. They managed to hoist the mare off the limb by pulling and lifting her from underneath using all their adrenaline filled muscles. The mare stumbled to her feet and made a few shaky steps forward down into the ditch. She stood there with a fountain of blood gushing out of the large hole in her side. Watching the fountain of blood diminish quickly into the brown water of the ditch was the saddest and most terrible spectacle any of them had
ever seen.

Ralph’s mother told him to go to the house and get his rifle. His sisters and brother were sprawled out around the area, some of them throwing up their breakfast, all of them crying. Ralph was shaking and he felt a well of tears rising in his throat. As he left the corral he saw the mare sink slowly to her knees and sit down in the bright red water.

On the way to the house to get his rifle, Ralph had so many different thoughts and feelings. He was amazed at the way life could change so fast. One minute the mare was alive and happy, and in a few minutes she would be dead, from just one little slip of her hoof. He thought about how it could have been anyone, himself even, as he was running along the bank chasing down a rabbit he shot. Life was so strange, death was even more strange. What will happen to the mare’s spirit and soul? What is she thinking? Is she afraid, will she be dead by the time I get back? Ralph felt terrible. He let the tears flow out and down his cheeks, since no one would see him crying. It felt better than swallowing and choking on them.

He got back to the corral a few minutes later. His mother took the loaded .22 and walked up close to the mare. She pointed the gun at the mare’s head and shot her twice. Everyone knew it was over at the sound of the gunshots. They started to pull themselves together. The other mares were slowly milling around each other, seemingly aware of what had happened and in a state of shock. The boys let the mares back out to pasture. The family took a week off from training, until the animal products truck came and hauled away the mare’s carcass. They dragged the log over to the burning pile and burned it to ashes. The water in the ditch flowed on.

Wind

Wind, like air
in an old man’s lungs,
rattles and coughs through the house.
My dream mind weaves
each breath
into fantasy forms.
Inhale — I fly
On outstretched arms empowered by sleep.
Exhale — I fall
into
childhood fear and adult reality.
My thoughts, like wind,
whirl and spin
through my mind.

Zabia Dolle
A Brother’s Death

This winter there has been no rain:  
Diamond Head is brown and dry.  
But now, tonight,  
The rain is falling without cease.

My brother Paul is in the drops of rain,  
And in the ocean where they fall,  
And in the sky from which they come,  
and in my clouded eye.
Power

Jade walked to the gas station down the street to meet her friends. It was a cold Friday night, and Jade felt the wind trying to sneak into her warm pockets of flesh. She could see the people on the street trying not to stare at her, while others openly gaped at her long, thick, unkempt, purple hair, fishnet hose, pierced nose, and worn black clothes. Jade had a small, thin frame and was not very tall, but her aura of confidence put her above all the people she walked past. She smiled as she sauntered down the sidewalk. Jade loved the power her image gave her. She was the center of attention.

When Jade finally got to the gas station, her friends were all there, standing around calling out rude comments to the rejects (who were anyone but themselves) walking past. Her best friend, Angela, a Japanese girl with spiked hair, ran up to give her a hug. Sunshine (the ever smiling girl), Crystal (a skinny black girl) and Elf (the blonde with the pointed shoes), all came up to say hello. Jade looked to the side and waved to the guys. Jason (the leader, the biggest, and the best fighter), Jack (the blue hair fury), Weasel (the heavy Filipino drunk), Ninja (the Japanese trapped in a white body), Anxiety (the nervous whiner), Bones (the skinny but fast punk), Chris (the spaced-out pot dealer), Spider (the tall, lanky druggie), and Wolfman (the new guy) all nodded their heads Jade’s way as if to say “what’s up.”

As Jade looked at the people on the street, they stared back, fear mixed with curiosity and awe in their faces. Regular people normally stayed away from this strange group. Those who didn’t usually ended up with broken bones. People that hung out in the scene, however, followed everything that happened to Jade and her friends. They knew all about everyone they beat up and everyone who was lucky enough to hang out with them and be “cool.” Wolfman was the newest addition, and the people in the scene waited to see if he was going to be accepted by the group.

Jade had seen a few small fights at the club she went to, but nothing really serious. She made jokes about the violence that surrounded the scene, and attempted to steel herself against the suffering of others. Jade looked to the side to see Jack smoothly walking up to her.

“Hey Jade, what’s up?”
“Nothing much, when are we gonna get outta here and go to the quarry?” Jade replied.
“I don’t know, but I hope it’s soon,” he said with a mischievous grin.
“Why? What’s up?”
“You know the new guy?”
“Wolfman? Yah, he seems ok, though a little on the wimpy side,” Jade observed.
“Yah,” Jack agreed, “he is a wimp. That’s why I’m gonna beat the hell outta him tonight.”
“Why? Just cause he’s not that tough?” she cried.
“Yah,” Jack restated as he walked off.
Jade watched as he left, his blue hair matching his jeans and his toned frame covered with a tight t-shirt. Her eyes passed over everyone and rested on Wolfman. She looked at his short brown hair and tall thin frame. Jade smiled as she thought, he doesn’t stand a chance. Angela walked up to block Jade’s view, her face filled with frustration.

“So,” Angela asked, “you think Wolfman deserves it?”
“I don’t know,” Jade responded.
“I don’t. Wolfman didn’t do anything wrong. I think he’s cool.”
“Yah, but you gonna tell Jack that? He ain’t gonna listen.”
“I know, but I feel so helpless, like I can’t even warn Wolfman. This sucks.”

“Yah, well,” Jade sighed, “at least it won’t be a boring night.”
Jason finally told everyone to get into the cars and head for the quarry, a remote area where they drank because they could see the pigs coming if they tried to drive there. Jade jumped in Elf’s rusted white Toyota with Angela, Sunshine, and Crystal. She looked out the window and saw Jason, Wolfman, Spider, and Bones get in Ninja’s spray painted black Datsun, and Weasel, Anxiety, and Chris jump in Jack’s puke-green Toyota.

When they got to the quarry about 25 minutes later, everyone jumped out of the cars and began opening beers and lighting cigarettes. Jade could feel the
tension. It was so thick that she felt like she was walking through cream of mushroom soup. Everyone was waiting, except for Wolfman. He had no idea. After about an hour, everyone seemed to relax and Jade saw Wolfman walking toward her.

“What’s up, dude?” she called out.

“Hey!” Wolfman called back, “What’s up?”

“Nothin, just cruisin and waiting for Angela to bring me a new beer.”

“Where were you last night? We were all hangin out.”

“Yah, I know, but my parents are idiots and I can’t come out every night.”

“Yah, mine can be a hassle sometimes. But you should try to get out more often, to hang out with everyone.”

“I wish I could,” Jade sighed. “When I turn 18, they have no hold on me.”

“That’ll be cool, hurry up and turn 18, or learn how to sneak out your window,” Wolfman answered.

“Dude, I live on the 17th floor!” Jade laughed.

“Well, learn to fly!” Wolfman replied with a laugh as he walked away. Jade laughed as she watched him go and thought, Wolfman isn’t such a bad guy. Actually, he’s really cool. Angela walked up with a couple of beers and whispered, “I guess Wolfman is let off the hook.”

Jade was about to reply when she noticed Jack walking up to Wolfman. Angela huddled closer to Jade as Jack cracked Wolfman straight in the mouth. Jade tried to comfort both herself and Angela. She held tightly to Angela’s hand when Wolfman went down after the first punch. Jade saw movement everywhere as all the guys jumped in to help Jack. She saw Anxiety, Spider, Ninja, and Jason kick Wolfman in the head, stomach, and back. Jade saw Bones slam his skateboard down on the side of Wolfman’s skull. She saw the blood as Jack smashed Wolfman’s face with a rock. Through it all she saw Wolfman lying in the dirt, not having time to look up as the pain kept coming.

Jade wasn’t sure if it had been seconds or hours when they stopped. She looked at Angela and held her as she silently cried. Jade heard Sunshine yell, “COPS!” and everyone scrambled into the cars. Inside Elf’s car, Jade looked out the window at Wolfman in Jason’s car, the blood and dirt sticking to his features. Jade frowned and her eyes began to water. She looked at the blood that covered the ground and stared hard at it, as if she could see Wolfman’s self-confidence and self-respect shriveled in that puddle of blood.

Sunshine looked back at her and smiled her carefree smile.

“Hey, Jade, wasn’t that the coolest? I wish the cops had never come,” Sunshine said.

“I don’t know, Wolfman was pretty cool,” Jade replied.

“Yah, I guess he was ok, but just think of the people in the scene that will be wondering what happened to Wolfman,” Sunshine responded. “When they find out what happened, we’ll get to see the fear in their eyes!”

“Yah, I guess, and at least it hasn’t been a boring night,” Jade sighed. Jade’s teeth gnawed on her lower lip as she thought about Sunshine’s words, and she smiled as she was reminded of the power and control she felt with these people. Jade wiped off her wet eyes and stared at the brown backing of the driver’s side car seat and kept smiling as they drove off. As she lit up her cigarette, she heard the sirens of the pigs’ cars getting farther away.
Chartreuse to Blue

Sometimes the world seems blind
changing colors and hues —
yellow to green, chartreuse to gray,
like the chameleon can do.

Offering a veil of deceit,
grinning all the while,
a cool and cunning vixen
laying in wait for her prey,
like the chameleon would do.

Dazzling people with a charm,
so liquid to the touch,
lightly pouncing on their hearts
while swinging from mood to mood,
like the chameleon can do.

Confronted with the truth,
her dignity abused,
she sits poised like a statue,
free of feeling and aloof,
like the chameleon would do.

Perched up high and out of sight,
 springing from heart to heart,
leading the way . . . beckoning to all,
"Trust me," she says, "I can turn chartreuse to blue."
Like the chameleon can do.
If Only You Knew

My true intentions are nothing to be wary of,

but I know these days it's hard to trust.

Sometimes the mind corrupts what is pure.

Ikue

She is a palm tree found in the tropics under the hot sun growing, swaying with the wind's breath day by day Her will is not strong She is going with the wind Her secrets are not vast but her abilities are well known Seemingly useless, yet she is also like the fruit of the palm: hard, dark, brown, uninteresting on the outside sweet, innocent, white, pure on the inside
Runner

Eileen Kunimura

Endorphin
Pain — pain relief
I slip into shoes each morning,
nine miles of square-patched sidewalk beneath my feet.
Fifteen kilometer, one track mind,
I'm the priestess of exertion.
I've perfected the trip.
It's been said I'm hooked.
Why? Why not?

Surpasses understanding,
I'm committed to win.
Each foot fall shoots adrenaline.
The strikes are a mother
but the hill climbs, what a rush.
I'm force fed on extreme endurance.

It's true.
I can't stop the habit
legs sprint, out stretched, four feet at a time.
Sock'd in the face by bus and car exhaust, then
carried away by yet another blast of fresh air.
I'm a diluted mixture of energy and matter.
Exacting, exactly!

My ration
of space and time
will last this life time.
Self-will run riot, I won’t let go.

It's a rendezvous,
a sparring ring
where I place obstacles before myself
which I must overcome.

Honestly,
I try
to regenerate myself in increments,
an invigorating employment.
Let's face it, I'm strung out.
Keep in mind it's a solitary sport.
Probably because no one can keep up with me,
not during my LSD's.
I'm an Olympian in my black nylon shorts
lapping the miles
shoes, socks, jog bra, t-shirt and visor.
The daily ritual
like a prayer offered up to the Goddess Nike
to be absolved of all past sins to my body,
offering up my physique.

It's a religion
but as in any other sport
meant to break all the rules,
like a hand held video set
where I beat myself at my own game.

What a pick me up this is
despite shin splints, tendinitis and runner's knee
with each twenty minute interval
packed with electrolytes.
Skippidy — skip —
Now I'm running.
Once hooked,
now I'm free!
The Shaman

He is prehistory
when hands were stained with myth
and men still had use for bones.
He threw his soul too high
and huddled in his painted cave
waiting, songless, for it to return.

He speaks in a voice thick
as a full-bellied nap,
the stone Buddha lost
in an enlightened haze.
Exhaling himself out in one breath,
his face pries at the closed horizon.

I long to ask him,
but I know one never questions a cloud,
I long to ask:
is it possible
to be too much spirit?
Franklin Kwan

**Ferrari**

Red Ferrari

Crouching on the side of the road

Sleek

Sexy

348 Spider

2-door, steel-body roadster

Hunting for a path to follow.

EPA city driving 13 mpg

Red Ferrari

Its engine roars with passion

32-valve DOHC V-8

Fast

Powerful

top speed 171 mph

Power SAE net 310 bhp @ 7200 rpm

Torque SAE net 2291 l-ft @ 4000 rpm

Waiting for the opportunity to explode.

0 to 60 in 5.3 sec.
standing 1/4 mile in 13.3 sec.

Red Ferrari

A work of art

Grace

Form

wheelbase 96.4 in.
166.5 x 74.4 x 46.0 in.
curb weight 3252 lb.

Made for the connoisseur

rack & pinion steering
independent front and rear suspension
Pirelli P Zero tires

$121,900.00
Caravans

A walk in the Springfield suburbs occasionally rewarded your patience with a found treasure, usually awkward, rusted scraps of steel discarded in the overgrowth behind Ourisman Dodge. Once found, these pieces made the rounds of the neighborhood, grazing the hands of friends eager to make the next day’s discovery. By the end of the day, after tiring of its weight and familiar imperfections, they were, more often than not, heaved into the canal bordering our subdivision.

Scott, Dustin and I were convinced that a real discovery was at hand, something distinct that would mark the shapeless days.

“I want to find a dead deer,” Scott said, “so I can stick its head on my wall right above my soccer trophy.”

“Billy Snodgrass once told me that sometimes, when guys get tired of them, they get all their Playboy magazines together and stick them underneath rotted planks in the woods,” Dustin said.

“Snodgrass would know,” I said. “What I really want to find is a broken T.V. that I can put in my room after my dad fixes it. That, or a rattler skin.”

Previous summers had revealed unforgiving knowledge. Bursts of activity whizzed by, aerodynamic and efficient. Empty days, however, were like interminable car trips to the beach, punctuated by travel games and streams of rain on the rear window.

The three of us found a complete engine on the bank of the canal one day. We straddled it, hammered it apart, attempted to repair it, and eventually forgot it, exiling it to a file in our brains opened only when Dustin would say, “Remember the engine?”

Returning home from these jaunts, I often passed my brother Paul leaving with his sullen facade and hunched shoulders, the wardrobe of a future cynic. My mother presided over the kitchen as always, occasionally teetering, but always managing to find the grace to find the proper ingredient or implement. She chided her competence from time to time, “Blame your Grandma.”

“Hello Daniel. How was your day?” she asked as I returned from Scott’s house.

“Fine, Mom,” I said over my shoulder.

Paul’s frequent, turbulent departures gave me the opportunity to explore his room with abandon. I spent hours listening to the Sex Pistols or the Replacements. Underground comics and magazines were stacked neatly and with card catalog perfection. I read three definitive accounts of the Kennedy assassination.

The squeaky latch on his window sill always betrayed his return home. One night, having fallen asleep in his room, I awoke to see him clambering awkwardly through the window. He smelled of cigarettes and dewy grass. White paint from the window sill stained his jeans. He turned to shout-whisper a goodbye, “Lily. Lily. I’ll see you tomorrow.”

Sometimes I would hear him return at night and wonder what he’d do were I to latch the window shut one evening. Would he struggle and curse the window or would he simply stare into the room, then leave, with only a fading breath mark on the window left to remind us of his existence.

Left to my own devices during the day, I would invariably seek out the companionship of Scott before Dustin could whisk him away to prow Wal-Mart. Walking down Elden St., one could glimpse the rumblings of commerce encroaching on a Springfield once known chiefly as a railroad hub.

Gaudy billboards proclaiming “A new tomorrow, a new Springfield,” evidence of that which was already etched into the faces of the veterans commiserating at American Legion outpost 367 as well as the baby-boomers speeding out of the newly opened Safeway in their glowing Dodge Caravans.

Scott was waiting on the steps of 7-11, where we met on Thursdays to meet the weekly shipment of comics. The deliveryman’s name was Al, or so we guessed by the name on his van. We never bothered to ask, assuming he’d disappear until next week, when we would despair at the whims of his schedule that might bring him a half hour late, or not at all. He entered the store, chatting briefly with the rotating clerks. Returning to the van, he wheeled out a cumbersome pile of comics and magazines bound with rigorous plastic. He dropped the bale of comics on the sidewalk in front of us roughly, as if sloughing off a great burden.
The clerks admonished us to wait, so we bided our time, pretending to weigh the purchase of Schick Slim Twins or Pepperidge Farm’s Chessmen. “Look, Danny. I told you the new issue of G.I. Joe was coming in,” Scott said.

“Aren’t you getting a little old for that,” I said. “Besides, Steve Leialoha’s art sucks. Check out this Daredevil.”

We’d had similar arguments before. From what I’d gleaned from our conversations in school, Scott’s father was already pressuring him to follow him into the military. I was appalled by Scott’s complete lack of resolve regarding his own future. G.I. Joe. It was as if he were grooming himself for his fate. He seemed unable to detour from his forced march.

“I think I’ll just pick up this G.I. Joe, a Conan, and X-men,” Scott said.

“Your loss,” I said.

“Can I borrow a dollar?” Scott asked. “I don’t have enough for a Slurpee and comics.”

“Here you go,” I said.

Once we had comics and Slurpees, we walked down Elden oblivious to each other, pausing only to look up as airport-bound buses whooshed by.

Springfield people seldom possessed the cabin fever rampant in many small towns, the desire to create a new persona by moving to the city. The town itself, unwilling or not, was seeking a new identity comprised of Old World architecture and monoliths with one-way glass.

I decided to save my comics until I returned home later that evening. Turning to reveal my plans for the day, a flash of light on the sidewalk burned itself onto my inner eyelid.

“Do you see that?” I asked.

“See what?” Scott asked.

“Mad dash,” I said, bounding towards it, hoping for at least a silver dollar.

I have never been a stellar athlete, but neither was I ever picked last when choosing teams, a fact of which I was justifiably proud. I was more like a carefully chosen second-round draft pick, valued for his ability to deliver the ball to others with flashier talent. Scott was first-round material.

Reaching the object first, despite my head start, Scott snatched it and held it up to the sun to inspect it.

“This is what you were a running for? It’s not even American. What can you buy with this?” Scott asked.

“Let me see,” I said urgently, hoping to reclaim my treasure. “I saw it first.”

Scott turned his back to me and further inspected what I had glimpsed to be a coin.

“I think I’ll take it home. My dad’ll know what it is.” Scott said.

“Hey, wait,” I said. “I saw it first. Gimme it. Remember that dollar you owe me?”

Scott looked at the coin, then up at me as if measuring the outcome of each decision.

“Here, take it. We’re even,” he said.

I took the coin and shoved it into my pocket without a glance. As we played basketball throughout the evening, I patted my pocket during each pause in play, afraid that the coin’s rhythmic tumblings would fling it out of my pocket and capture the attention of one of the kids from Springfield High.

As the teams dispersed, I dug into my pockets to reassure myself. Still there.

“Call me tonight,” I shouted to Scott, who was already rapidly bounding across the canal bridge.

“Dinner’s going to be late tonight,” my mother said when I reached home.

“You father’s finishing up a project at work.”

“Okay, Mom,” I said and headed up to Paul’s room.

Paul was home. He sat Indian style on the bed, reading last month’s issue of the Utne Reader.

“Paul, look what I found,” I said.

I took the coin out of my pocket and inspected its brilliance in the light. It was marred by one small flaw on the edge, a tiny hole bored right above the eagle on the front of the coin.

“Hold on a second. Let me see that,” Paul said and snatched the coin from my hand.

“Hmm,” he said, “You might actually have something here. It’s a German coin, and see the swastika right here, you don’t see that very often these day. Can’t imagine who’d be carrying a coin like that around here.”

“You think it’s worth anything?” I asked.
"Probably a lot," he said, "Nazi coins probably fetch a fair price these
days. But I’m no collector. You should probably take it on down to that stamp
and coin place at the mall. Myself, I’d be more interested in who’s carrying
around a coin like that."

This roused my attention. Fueled by the movies, I’d come to believe that
Nazis were the yardstick by which evil was measured. I was determined to roust
a coven of Nazis in my own backyard.

"Thanks, Paul," I said, grabbing the coin before rushing downstairs to
check the phone book for Schmidts and Wolfgangs, anything possessing a faint
German taint. I’d only found a Kohl’s car wash before Mom called us all for
dinner.

Before the phenomenon had been identified, we’d realized that we seldom
sat down as a family for dinner. This was initiated by Paul, who’d begun a
macrobiotic diet last week, hoping to cleanse himself of "the impurities forced
upon us by the horrors of modern food processing."

This was one of the few times when we’d been together in weeks. Our
father rarely spoke anymore during dinner, only pausing on his path to the table
to remove his coat and loosen his tie.

Scott had prepared a tabouli salad for himself, garnished with several
translucent leaves of what appeared to be some kind of sea vegetable.

"Dad," I said, "look what I found today. I was walking down Elden St.
with Scott and it was just sitting there." I removed the coin from my pocket,
holding it directly under the kitchen lamp to capture it in its best light.

He speared a boiled potato with his fork and looked up slowly.

"What’ve you got there? A Nazi coin. Could be worth something," he
said.

"Actually, Paul and I were more interested in finding out how it got on
the street like that," I said, brazenly lying. I hoped it’d be worth thousands at
least. "Maybe there’s Nazis trying to start a Fourth Reich right here in
Springfield."

"I wouldn’t think so. There are a lot of foreigners around these days, but
I haven’t seen any Germans. Japanese, that’s another story. Maybe if you take
it to a coin shop, you can get enough to buy a computer or something useful."

"Remember that guitar I wanted? It’s on sale down at the music shop now.
Plus you get extra strings," I said, seizing the window of opportunity.

"Forget about it. You’re absolutely not going to waste your time with
something like that. Look at your brother," he said.

"Yeah, kill off his dreams," Paul said. He leaned back in his chair and
agitated his salad, dropping a fibrous leaf onto the floor.

"And what did you do today?" he asked Paul. "You’ve been out of school
for two months already, and I haven’t seen you once crack the paper open
looking for a job."

By this point, he was gripping the edge of the table, his fingers rapidly
turning white.

"At least I don’t sit on my ass all day trying to design pipe fittings or
create a better O-ring," he said. The lengthening black hair at the back of his
neck swayed as he spoke.

Their arguments rarely went beyond this common standoff. Paul retreated
to his room, and turned up the stereo. Dad, to his seat in front of the television.
I climbed the stairs to my room. While reading my comics, I noticed a
gnat crawling along the edge of the wall. I crushed it and cleaned the wall with
a Kleenex. I took the coin out of my pocket and examined it, creating secret
histories behind its single flaw.

As I turned down the lights for bed, I heard the latch loosen on Paul’s
window. Throwing aside my Spider-Man curtains, I looked outside, watching
Paul diminish in the moonlight.

Taking the coin, I crept to his room, tripping on the edge of the worn
carpeting before his door. His room was somber and cold, devoid of any youthful
vigor.

I gazed out the window, sharing the muted moonlight as it shone on rows
of uniform houses and reflected itself tenfold on the newly waxed roofs of stable
Caravans.

I also felt the presence of the girl named Lily, clad in a sundress and
leather jacket, holding herself in the chill air under Paul’s window.

As I turned the window shut, then reopened it, sharing an elder breeze with
Springfield. Beneath the window lay a collapsing stack of dog-eared magazines.
I placed the coin on the window sill, regarded its weight, and patiently waited for
an answer.
Braving the Storm

My gaze turns toward the mountains surrounded by clouds hovering awaiting the storm to ascend toying recklessly with my emotions awakening memories of yesterday.

In my lovers' arms sheltered from the storm love rages up adding light to the clouds gathering hidden dreams once lost.

Alone and powerless in my dreams fears hidden behind smiles echoing the songs of yesterdays. Surviving life's storms braving the darkness of my dreams reaching out towards that new mountain unveiling new loves.

A woman who has loved but not lost.
James Becker

Francesca and the Frozen Plain

I scan the ocean
of frozen prairie
for a lost calf.

This vast land
once resounded
with calls of wildebeests,
the fierce tiger
and wooly mammoths.

Now,
only the Arctic blast
roars down the Bighorns
as trains
rumble through the black.

On the horizon
a black dot.
My horse balks
in the deep snow.

The calf is dead,
it's eyes frozen
in peace.

The ride home
is a slow struggle.
The horse staggers
and wallows
in the deep snow.

I hunker down against the cold
and dream of the evening's veal.
James Becker

Francesca Amid the Ancient Warriors

Secret silence
surrounds
my heart draped
in black lace.

Mortally wounded
on love's battleground
I lie for months
bandaged and bleeding,
umbed by
shock
and booze.

Then
you came to me
a whisper of smoke
drifting
gently through
the window.

You cleanse my body
with purifying lips.
I am raised
from the living dead
when you gaze upon me
with eyes of compassion.

Now,
I live by the moment
with comets streaking
across wondrous
tropical sky.

Wild flowers
flood my soul
and
I gather strength
through each of your
loving orgasms.
The Queen’s Defense

*You better run
You better hide.*

Simple song.
Sound advice.

Your world
now a jerky elevator ride.
Random arrival
on strange floors.

Friends and family
feed on your soul
like crabs picking the flesh
off a still living victim.
They will remember your bones
fondly.

A Queen cannot run
or hide.
She must fight for self
and her domain.

Unfold the pockets of your mind.
Find the fears
and kill them.

But without a knight
the Queen is doomed
to attacks of knaves
mad dogs
and foul leeches.
Once upon a time, miles from nowhere, there was a little girl, cute as a button and one in a million, named Elisabeth. She lived with her mother in a house on the edge of a village. She was a breath of fresh air, with a mind of her own, who marched to the beat of a different drummer. Her boots were made for walking and she could really strut her stuff. Everyone who knew her loved her because she was one of a kind, gentle as a lamb with a heart of gold. She wouldn't hurt a fly if you paid her to do it. She couldn't be bought, not on your life, and you can bet your life on it. I mean to tell you she was a gem, a real Jim-Dandy. She was especially near and dear to her granny, who loved her more than anything in the world.

One day, out of the blue, her granny sewed a red velvet cloak with a hood that was out of this world. She gave it to the little yard ape for her Happy Birthday, just for the hell of it. It looked so pretty and she loved the hell out of it so much that it blew her socks off, took her breath away and tickled her pink. After that, she never wore anything else; therefore, everyone and their dog called her Little Red Riding Hood.

Early one morning, about the crack of dawn, when it was still as cold as a Witch's tit in a brass bra, her mother said to her, "Come here for heaven's sake, Red Riding Hood, and listen to me. Hold your tongue, don't speak until you're spoken to and if you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all. I want you to take this fresh baked bread, just hot out of the oven, some sweet butter and a bottle of vino to your granny. She is sick in bed, down and out and under the weather, like you wouldn't believe. This grub will do her a world of good and get her up to snuff. She'll be tickled to death, pleased as punch and happy as a clam. Go right away, get out of my hair for crying out loud, you're wasting time; now be it. Go now before it gets hotter than hell. Put a spring in your step, a song in your heart and a smile on your face. Dig out pip-squeak. Promise me, cross your heart and hope to die, that you won't stray off the path, get side-tracked, spaced out or lost in the ozone. Don't run or you'll fall down and break the bottle in a thousand pieces and you'll have no one to blame but yourself. Then granny will have no wine, you'll be up shit creek without a paddle and don't come crying to me afterward. When you get there, mind your manners, act your age and toe the line. If I've told you once I've told you a thousand times, we're with you honey, every step of the way. Say, 'good morning, I love you' when you see your granny. Start out with a clean slate because she's a little off her rocker and can be fit to be tied when she's as sick as a dog and crazy as a loon, not to mention, sharp as a tack. She doesn't miss a trick, knows all the ropes and always has a bone to pick. She'll fly off the handle because she's not playing with a full deck. She just doesn't have a clue. But she does rule the roost in this family so I'll give her credit for that power trip. It's a crappy job but somebody's got to do it. God help us. Wake up child, quit dilly-dallying around. Don't stay too late, fly the coop and come on home."

"Yes, Mama," said Little Red Riding Hood. "I promise I'll do everything just as you told me to do, no questions asked."

Now, her granny lived in a cottage in the middle of the forest, a good half-hour walk from the village. But Little Red Riding Hood knew the way, so she wasn't afraid to go by herself. She had a memory like an elephant and was as smart as a whip. By and by, when she had walked far enough into the woods and felt a bit lonely, who should she meet but a sly and hungry lone wolf. He was hungry as a wolf and as sly as a fox. He was leading a dog's life and it came with the territory. Things could be worse, but that's life.

She had no idea, for the life of her, what a low-down, conniving, good for nothing slime ball the wolf was, so she wasn't afraid of him in the least.

"Good morning, Red Riding Hood," he said, smiling from ear to ear like a Chaucer cat, out to lunch.

"Good morning, wolf," she answered, while looking through her rose colored glasses as happy as a lark without a care in the world.

"Where are you off to so early in the day, my dear?" he asked.

"I'm going to my granny's home sweet home. She's sick in bed you know because she has a finger in every pie and her nose in everybody else's business. She has a gift for gab and can talk your ear off."
"You don’t say?" he murmured. "And what have you got in your basket?"
"Well, what’s it to you? It’s really none of your business, if I do say so myself. But if you must know I have some delectable edibles that mama and I made up for granny. So, I’m taking them to her, for better or worse."
"Now isn’t that nice, your heart’s in the right place. Why, you’d probably give her the shirt off your own back. And where does your grandmother live, Little Red Riding Hood?"
"Oh, it’s a hop, skip and a jump on further into the woods as the crow flies. Surely you know her place," said Little Red Riding Hood.

The wolf thought to himself, "She’s as proud as a peacock and too big for her britches but good enough to eat. She’ll be a tasty dessert after I chow down on the old woman. I must make hay while the sun shines and really pig out on these two delectable edibles."

He moseyed along with Red Riding Hood for awhile, putting his best foot forward, making small talk and gossiping about the neighbors. Then he said, "Just look at those pretty wild flowers, they are a sight for sore eyes. For goodness sake girl, why don’t you relax a bit, take it easy and stop to smell the roses. You are so solemn and well-behaved as if you were going to school. Everything else is so happy out here in the forest."

Then Little Red Riding Hood looked away from the path, but she still couldn’t see the forest for the trees. She put her nose to the grindstone and forced herself to see her way clear to the beauty around her. Then suddenly, as if in a dream, she saw sunlight dancing through the trees like Ginger and Fred. The windflowers and butterflies were as pretty as a picture. She thought, "I’m sure grandmother will sit up and take notice if I bring her a bouquet of flowers. It’s still early in the day so I have all the time in the world to pick some flowers for her."

She told the wolf to get lost, scram, go jump in a lake or hit the road, Jack — so he did. She wandered off among the trees picking daisies and whistling a happy tune. Time stood still for her. But not one so let grass grow under her feet, she became a dynamo, a ball of fire and made her way like an eager beaver, picking flowers and keeping quiet as a mouse all the while.

Meanwhile, the poor excuse for a wicked wolf made a beeline for Granny’s place and knocked quietly at the door.

"Who’s there?" called the grandmother from her bed.

"It’s me, the Fuller Brush Man."
"Yeah right, and I’m the big bad wolf," said the grandmother. "I heard you coming a mile away. Quit joking around and get in here, young lady. Let yourself in, the door is unlocked."

So the wolf opened the door, licking his lips and ran straight to the bed. Without even a "hello, how are you," he swallowed up the poor old grandmother in one gulp. She sat in his stomach like a ton of bricks. He was a meat and potatoes kind of guy, but there were no spuds to be found. Enough is enough anyway, he thought. He put on a clean nightgown and shawl, jumped into the bed as snug as a bug in a rug. He pulled the bed curtains closer together and waited patiently for dessert to arrive.

Meanwhile, not far away, Little Red Riding Hood was asleep at the wheel. She snapped out of it when she had so many flowers that they were coming out of her ears. She’d been picking them like they were going out of style, and there was no tomorrow. She made a mad dash for the cottage when it began to rain cats and dogs.

When she got there, she tip-toed in, walking on pins and needles. She felt beside herself, like she was losing her mind, but didn’t know why. She was at loose ends and started to come apart at the seams. She didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. "What’s wrong?" she thought. "I always like coming to grandmother’s so much. Why do I feel so out of sorts and frightened as a lamb?"

"Good morning, Grandmother," she called, but there was no answer. You could have heard a pin drop. She moved as slow as molasses going up-hill in January, to the bedroom and pulled the bed curtain back. There lay her grandmother. She hadn’t seen her in a coon’s age. She looked a little green around the gills, like something the cat had dragged in.

"Grandmother, what big hairy ears you have! Can you believe your ears? You're all ears!" she said.
"The better to hear you with, my dear," said the wolf in his sweetest little old lady voice.
"Oh, Grandmother, your eyes are bigger than your stomach and as shiny as stars!"
"The better to see you with, my dear."
"Your hands look so strange and different, like something out of my worst nightmare."
"The better to hug you with, my dear."

"Please, Grandmother, why do your teeth look sharper than a razor’s edge?"

"So I can slice you into bite size pieces, my little tidbit." As the wolf said this, he sprang out of the bed and swallowed up Little Red Riding Hood in one gulp, not bothering to take the time to chew.

The wolf had really done it this time. "I’m a glutton for punishment," he told himself. "It’s either feast or famine. I’ve got to learn when to say no to second helpings." He felt like something had to give. Finally, he couldn’t stomach it any longer and lost his cookies (so to speak). Up, up and away came Little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother like two peas from a pod. They were soaked to the skin and looked like death warmed over, but they had a new lease on life. They’d come through thick and thin together and wormed their way out.

The wolf was as white as a ghost and a little under the weather. Before he could catch his breath, the two former damsels in distress pulled the rug out from under him, read him the riot act, put him in his place and pulled no punches. The tables had turned. The wolf was between a rock and a hard place with his back against the wall.

To make a long story shorter, they skinned him alive, cut him to shreds and stewed him in his own juices. They tanned his hide and put his skeleton in the closet. The wolf was one tough turkey to eat, so they fed him to the dogs (where were the dogs when they had needed them?). Then they called it a good day, got drunker than skunks on the wine, and lived happily ever after.

---

Shattered Windows

Two turns and four years into time
finds the once bright world twisted in view.
Blackness grows from what was white.
The swimmer drowns in an empty sea of water
dragged under again and again by the relentless surf.
Slowly it all falls down and turns to ash.

Where the fire of passion once raged lies only the naked ash
of yesterday and the fallacious memories of a time
best forgotten, left to slowly die under the surf.
I am an empty shell, a withered husk, my solitary view
from a dark and shuttered window until the water
recedes and washes all away with the white.

Images in black and white
flash by in a flurry of ash,
slide by my eyes like water
racing mindlessly with time.
They run down a river bed to a distant view,
a rendezvous with destruction in the surf.

Again and again I reach vainly into the surf
only to find the elusive sand slipping through the white
of my clenched knuckles and no window back to the view
that we once had shared. Like tendrils of ash-
blonde hair the sand spirals down in slow motion, time
has come to a standstill, it too has been swallowed by the water.
My heart is cold, yet I am consumed by a fire that water will never quench — I emerge from the pounding surf unscathed, heedless of the unmoving hands of time, Seeing only the fixed fake smiles on faces in the white reflection of windows smeared with soot and ash. Each window is cracked and without a view.

Dark night silently descends, no light in view. I see my distorted shadow reflected on blackened pools of water the picture portrayed nothing more than cremated ash. In the moonlight all seems serene, even the furious surf that calls me to my past, to the shattered windows with white curtains that belong to another world and time.

In the light of the morning, I look toward another view slowly turning away from the water and the window that has long since turned to ash.
Sorrow for Yesterdays

My eighteenth birthday had just passed when Wanda came to work at the bank. It was the fall of 1988, and I was newly married to an Army soldier stationed at Schofield Barracks in Wahiawa. Wanda had just transferred to Hawaii from Arizona with her husband Jim—a career Russian Specialist for Military Intelligence assigned to the same base as my husband Carl. Since we lived in the same vicinity, Wanda started riding to work with me. That was the beginning of our friendship.

Every morning at 5:30 a.m. Jim would either drop Wanda off at my house or I would pick her up at Jim’s quad on the nearby base. Then we would sit through an hour of bumper-to-bumper traffic together. It was always pitch black when we left, and dawn would be barely breaking when we arrived at the bank in town. Luckily the lunch room above the branch was always opened early so we could go up and fix our Top Ramen breakfasts. Those instant saimins were consumed by the dozens. Sometimes they were both breakfast and lunch.

Once in a while we would decide to splurge and walk to McDonald’s for a “real” breakfast.

One particular cold, dark, and damp morning we were traipsing down the street for Egg McMuffins and saw a pigeon huddled on the ground by the base of a young tree. It was always pitch black when we left, and dawn would be barely breaking when we arrived at the bank in town. Luckily the lunch room above the branch was always opened early so we could go up and fix our Top Ramen breakfasts. Those instant saimins were consumed by the dozens. Sometimes they were both breakfast and lunch. Once in a while we would decide to splurge and walk to McDonald’s for a “real” breakfast.

As a child Wanda had always tried to doctor the birds that her brothers shot down with their BB guns. Despite her care the poor creatures often died of their wounds. Death wasn’t new to her, and she wasn’t afraid of anything I knew of. Blood and guts didn’t even faze her (I was deathly afraid of blood, much less guts). She had aspirations of finishing her nursing degree at KCC and embarking on a career as an ER nurse or a paramedic.

Wanda and I had backgrounds that were a study in contrasts, yet in many ways we could not have been more similar. I admired Wanda for many reasons, especially since she was seven years my senior and had such a vast knowledge of the world. I looked up to her and loved her not only as a friend, but as an older sister as well. Often she was my confidante, mentor or just a shoulder to lean on.

When Carl finished his three years of service with the Army, we moved to New Mexico to be near his family. It was hard for me to leave Hawaii and my friends and family. I had lived in Hawaii all my life, and it was going to be a big change. Although I had only known Wanda for about 7 months, it seemed much longer and I knew I would miss her greatly.

The following two years apart saw a flurryed exchange of letters that kept us updated with each other’s lives, and when Carl and I finally moved back to Hawaii it seemed as if the separation had never occurred. In fact, our friendship was even stronger than before. We got our husbands together for the first time, and they hit it off immediately. Soon we were an inseparable foursome and spent nearly every weekend together cooking, barbecuing, going to the beach, playing cards, or just hanging out, drinking beer and talking.

I don’t quite recall when Jim and Wanda started having marital problems, but in the spring of 1991 Wanda told me that she was thinking about filing for divorce. Jim wanted children so badly that he was willing to ignore her health condition — she had lupus — and informed Wanda that if she wasn’t seriously planning to have a family with him then not to waste his time. At the time it didn’t seem to matter to him that lupus makes childbearing dangerous and in some cases even life-threatening. Wanda was hurt by his attitude, but it was far from her only gripe with their relationship. Although she loved kids, she was never interested in being a mother. She always joked that Carl and I would have kids, and they would always want to go over to Aunt Wanda’s house because she was so cool.

All I could do was offer Wanda a place to stay if she wanted to leave Jim. She was more than welcome to stay with Carl and me. Carl loved her almost as much as I did. Their experiences were so similar that they could have been brother and sister. As it turned out, Wanda and Jim worked it out,
and Jim was given a list to carry in his wallet reminding him of all the things he had to change or do to make their marriage work. Soon after this Wanda informed me that she and Jim were expecting. It was the unplanned outcome of their steamy reconciliation. Of course, she was going to carry the baby full term, as Jim adamantly refused for her to have an abortion. Wanda was hospitalized for the last two months of her pregnancy and I visited often. The day that little Marissa Nalani was finally born Carl and I were her first visitors. Wanda was drawn and gray, but still her spunky self. It was a hard labor with after-birth complications, but she was doing okay.

The next few days were a different story. The lupus cancer set into Wanda’s body, and while Marissa was discharged from the hospital to go home with her father, her mother was undergoing chemotherapy treatments and daily blood washes. I could have cried when I next visited and saw my beloved friend swollen to twice her usual size and the hideous blue-black bruises from the IV’s covering her arms and chest. Somehow I managed to stay and talk as if things were normal and Wanda were coming home tomorrow. Wanda herself was calm as usual and seemed in control of the situation. She certainly understood the medical procedures and tried to explain to me what was happening. All I could understand was that Wanda’s blood platelets were being chewed up by the lupus faster than they could be produced or replaced by blood washes. Nothing else seemed to sink in. As long as Wanda was confident and calm, nothing really bad could be happening.

Two weeks later, Wanda was sent home as an outpatient because they couldn’t do much more at the hospital. What that meant, I didn’t know, but I went over to visit her right away. It broke my heart to see Wanda so grotesquely swollen and barely strong enough to stand. I watched her struggle to bathe her own baby, leaning heavily on the sink, each stroke of the washcloth a belabored effort. Not wanting Wanda to sense the deep feelings of pity and grief that I felt, I tried to help as much as she would allow me. I knew her well enough to know how proud she was and how she despised being pitied.

Two days later Carl picked me up from work, and we went home as usual. On our way we passed Queen’s hospital, and I told Carl that I wished Wanda hadn’t been sent home so that we could stop right there and see her. Carl didn’t answer, but I didn’t take notice. I was happy about the promotion I had gotten that day and was already busy filling him in on all the details. I also was looking forward to the outer island trip with Jim and Wanda that we had planned for when Wanda was fully recovered. Things couldn’t have been better for me that day. It seemed that nothing could go wrong.

When we got home, Carl called me into the bedroom. He was sitting on the edge of our bed when I walked in, and I will have the next five minutes forever playing in my head like a bad dream on film played in agonizingly slow motion. Wind and rewind, over and over again.

Carl put his hands to his face and started to sob. He sobbed like I had never seen a man cry before. I know I never want to see it again. Inside I turned to ice, numbing for the blow I knew was coming. Somehow I already knew, but I just had to hear it. Struggling for the words, Carl managed to choke out, “I don’t know how to tell you ... I know how much you loved her,” and as he watched me, tears streaming down his face, I could only walk around the room in shock and disbelief. I wanted to scream and cry and mourn, but the more Carl, cried the less I was able to. Inside I was disintegrating, shattering into pieces that would be too tiny to ever find again. I could only go numb, so numb that the world seemed nearly unreal and maybe it was all a bad dream: a deep dark dream that I would come bursting out of, like a person dreaming of drowning bursts to the surface for air, then wakes, damp with cold sweat, clutching the bedsheets for dear life.

I heard Carl’s voice trickling into the corners of my mind, and then I knew it wasn’t a nightmare at all, but the horrifying reality. He told me that Jim had called him that morning to tell him that Wanda had gone into convulsions the night before and he had rushed her back to the hospital. She was in a coma when he left to go home and take care of the baby, but was in a fairly stable condition. Early in the morning the hospital had called him to tell him that she had unexpectedly gone into seizures and they had lost her. Poor Carl had done nothing all day but think about how to tell me about it. I refused to believe it was true.

It was a shock for all of us: for me, Carl, my family (who of course all knew Wanda very well), all of Wanda’s friends, family and co-workers, and even for Jim. Nobody had thought that she would really die. She was always a fighter, always strong. Maybe too strong, for she led us all to believe that she was okay and would pull through like she always did. Being discharged from
the hospital also seemed to have been a positive step. I thought about it all, and if I could have had just one wish, I would have wished for the chance to tell Wanda how much she meant to me and how much I loved her. I recalled all the hospital visits and the visit to Wanda’s home and how I didn’t appreciate them as much as I should have. They were precious moments. I didn’t even begin to realize their value until it was much too late for anything but regret. I will carry the heavy burden of that guilt and sorrow for the rest of my life. It will be kept in my heart forever, just like Wanda will be.
I took away three scenes . . .

One was the soft setting of the sun,
the calm before the night, a
rapid wash of darkness
over the land.
A gentle caress
of azure and carnation cast
over the serene
summer sky.

Another was an atmosphere filled with romance
dancing about in the heavens.
Sparks of glitter on the
slightly rippling water
sent surges of
energy throughout me.

The other was the furling of the waves
passing through one another, yet
remaining undestroyed,
crashing against the shore, leaving
damp, sparkling sand and
a mist of sea in the air
with each encounter.

I took away three thoughts . . .

The first was something I call love,
a deep inner passion
that must be explored,
then discovered,
a passion for words so deep, they
tumble furiously from my mind,
like the roaring,
crashing waves.

Another can be expressed by the word “feelings.”
Love, hate,
depression, ecstasy,
confusion:
Writing, releasing the
strong emotions in the
sea-sprayed grains of sand,
washed away by the
next wave and
overcome.

The last — peace:
Cradled by the comfort
and warmth of the generous
rays beaming from
the sun,
appreciating the temporary
silence,
interrupted only by the reassuring
melody of the gulls.
Drowned in the whirling,
raging ocean
are my fears,
miseries, and
insecurities.
Coloured

Cassandra Walton

I sit here watching the news.
Bombs going off in Joberg.
All colors are killed . . .
Black, White, Brown.

I lived with a coloured family in Cape Town,
back in nineteen eight-six.
I was more coloured than they.

When I am cold, I turn blue.
When I get sick, I turn green.
When I get burned, I turn red,
and if I get scared, then I turn white.

I am much more coloured than they.
Gateway

"Please, daddy, don't make me
do it!"

a rainbow feathered bird
arthritic wings
frozen by a cold
angry lust

out of the nest
her spirit
finds flight
in song
soaring

among shades
of blues
and rocky, rolling
Himalayan heights

gliding
down wild
rivers of
emotions
across deep
silent pools

over the edge of
ecstatic waterfalls
loud with tumbling
laughter

in spirit
her song
breathes freely
and inspires all
In a Room Down the Hall

In a room down the hall tucked away nice and neat
Are my childhood memories so soft and sweet.

There are pictures and paintings and snap shots, too.
There’s the can I tied with string and painted blue.
There’s Popo the monkey and Oodles the bear
Who just lie on the bed and stare into the air,
Boxes and toys all over the floor
And my rocking horse, Morris, who sleeps by the door.

On the desk is a picture of me skinning my knee.
I skinned it while falling from that darn tree.
I cried and cried so much because it hurt . . .
Mom put Mercurochrome on it to kill the dirt.
Here’s another, of me learning to swim —
Oh, look at this one, I’m on the jungle gym.

Oh, there you are my silly rubber-band gun!
I made you with sticks and some tape; we had lots of fun.
We played Cowboys and Indians, Cops and Robbers, too,
Dick Tracy, Superman, and Captain Kangaroo.

Everything here seems so peaceful and still,
Nothing can harm me, I am king of the hill.

Wait, what’s that in the corner on top of the shelf?
A box I’ve locked away, kept hidden from myself!
There are pictures and paintings and snapshots, too,
And a doll that says, "Mama" and cries, "BOO HOO,"

Bottles that hold all the tears that I cried,
Lonely days playing, and dreams pushed aside . . .
A box that holds all my hurt and pain,
All the times people teased me and called me names.
There are pictures there that I don't like to see,
And memories that I would just rather "let be" . . .

Like this one, when Philip teased my mom like a brute.
He said, "Hey, stupid girl! Your mom's a deaf mute!"
It made me so angry and made me so cross,
I could have thrown him to the ground and showed him
who's boss.

A boy spit in my face because I was white.
He said, "I don't like your kind here; get out of my sight."

Time for me now to leave this quiet place,
A journey worth taking that time can't erase.
Remembering my pleasures and confronting my pain
Leave fresh-fallen tears on my face like sweet rain.

In a room down the hall tucked away nice and neat,
Where my childhood memories are so soft and so sweet.

Island Woman
computer art
Ka Nani 1994

Staff:

Eileen Kunimura
Rae Marlow
R. E. McFeeters

Darkroom Technician & Photographer:
Bryan A. Sekiguchi

Faculty Adviser:
James Robinson

Typesetting, Editing, & Layout:
The Staff and Adviser
Gene Phillips,
Kapi‘olani Community College Print Shop

Printing:

Ka Nani thanks all writers and artists who submitted work for its consideration. Your generosity and creative talents make Ka Nani possible. Thanks also to faculty who encouraged their students to submit. Special thanks to the following Language Arts Department faculty: Wini Au, Guy Nishimoto, Meena Sachdeva, and Jimmy Shimabukuro.